

Language Access, Electoral Administration, and Americans of Asian Descent

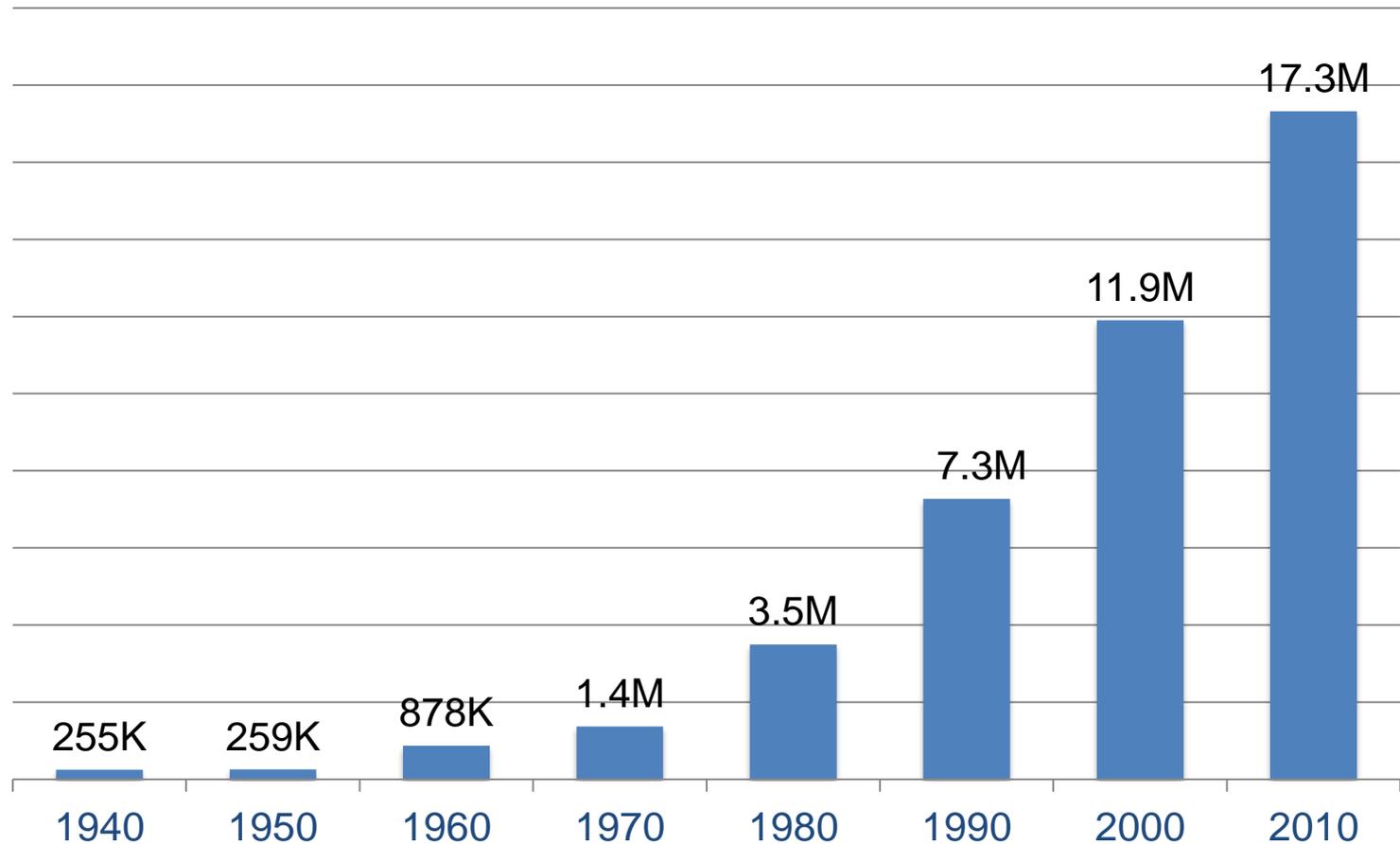
Presentation before the Presidential Commission on Election
Administration

Philadelphia, PA
4 September 2013

Taeku Lee
UC-Berkeley

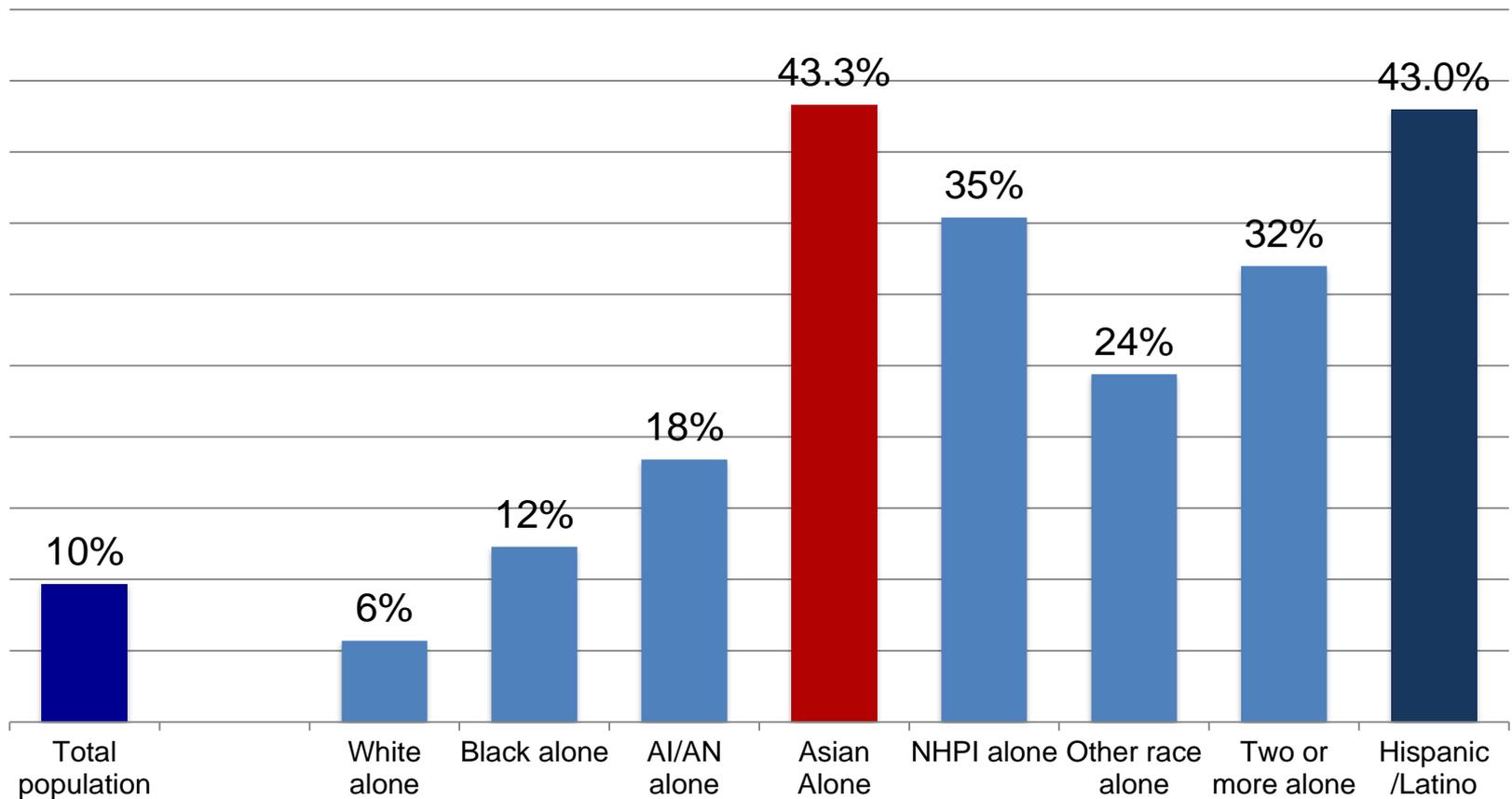
1. Asian Americans are arguably the most rapidly growing segment of the US population.

18 Million and Growing



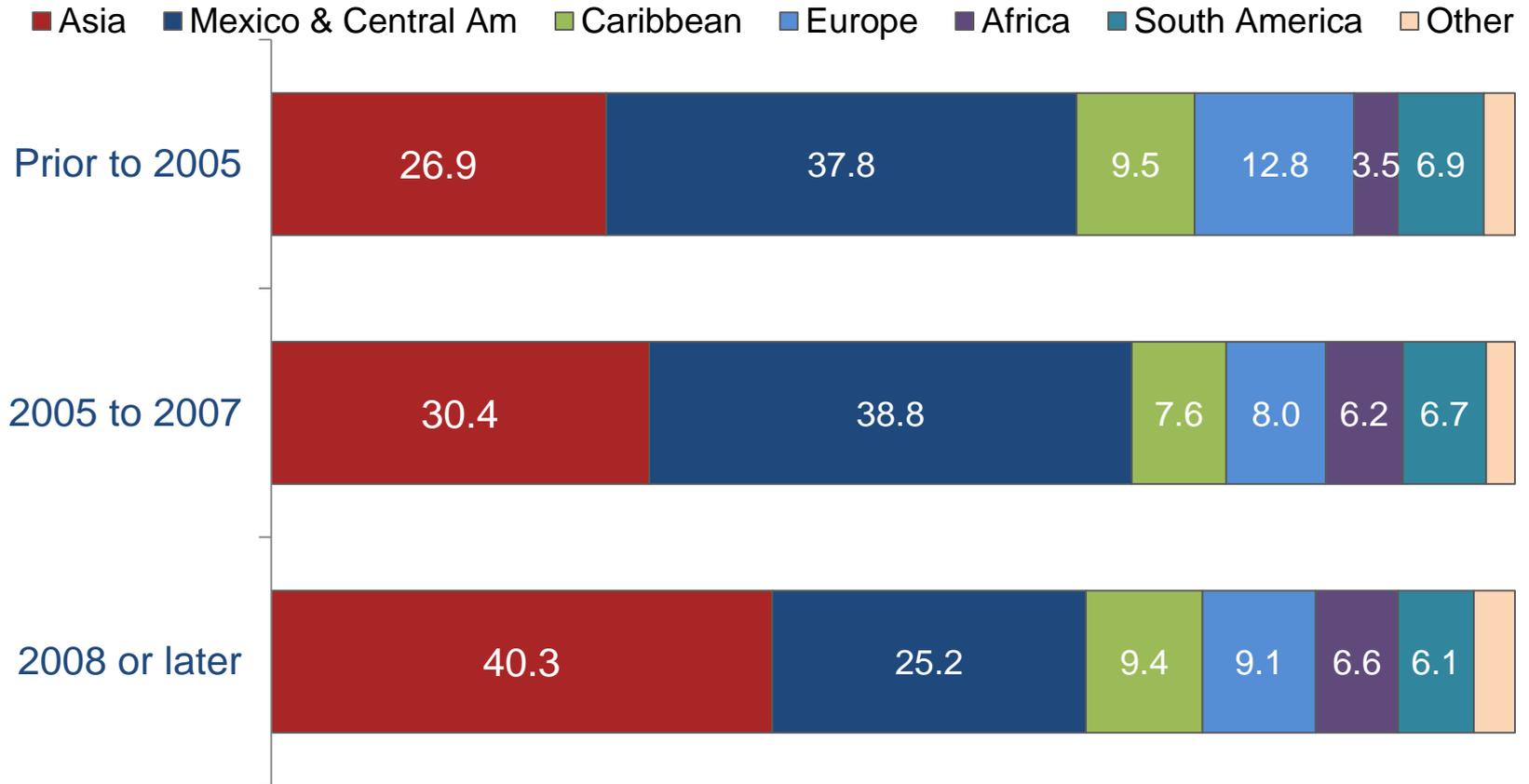
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Highest Growth Rate from 2000 to 2010



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

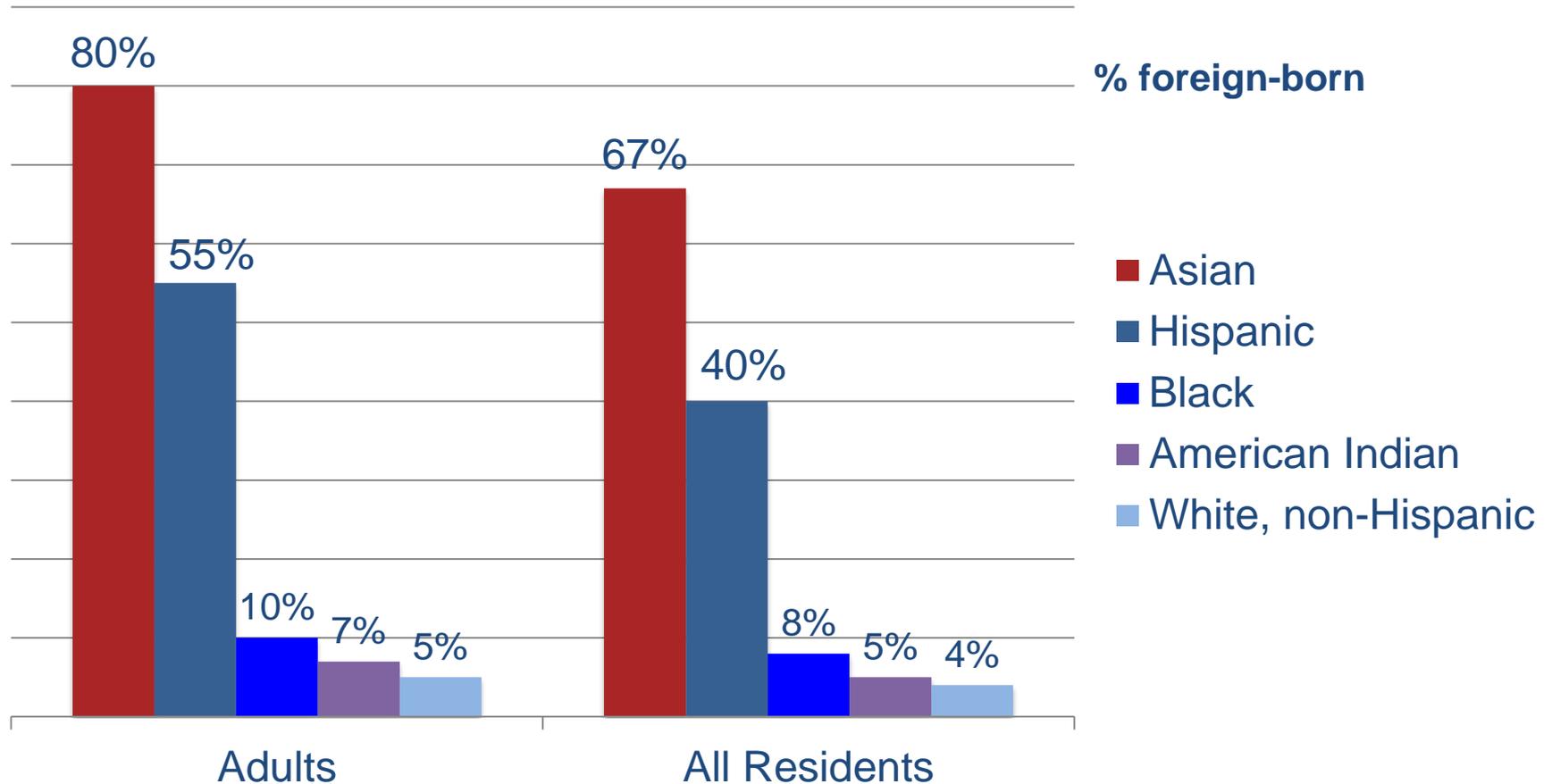
Largest Contributor to Migration Today



Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2011

2. Asian Americans are heavily foreign-born and linguistically diverse.

A Heavily Immigrant Population



Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2011

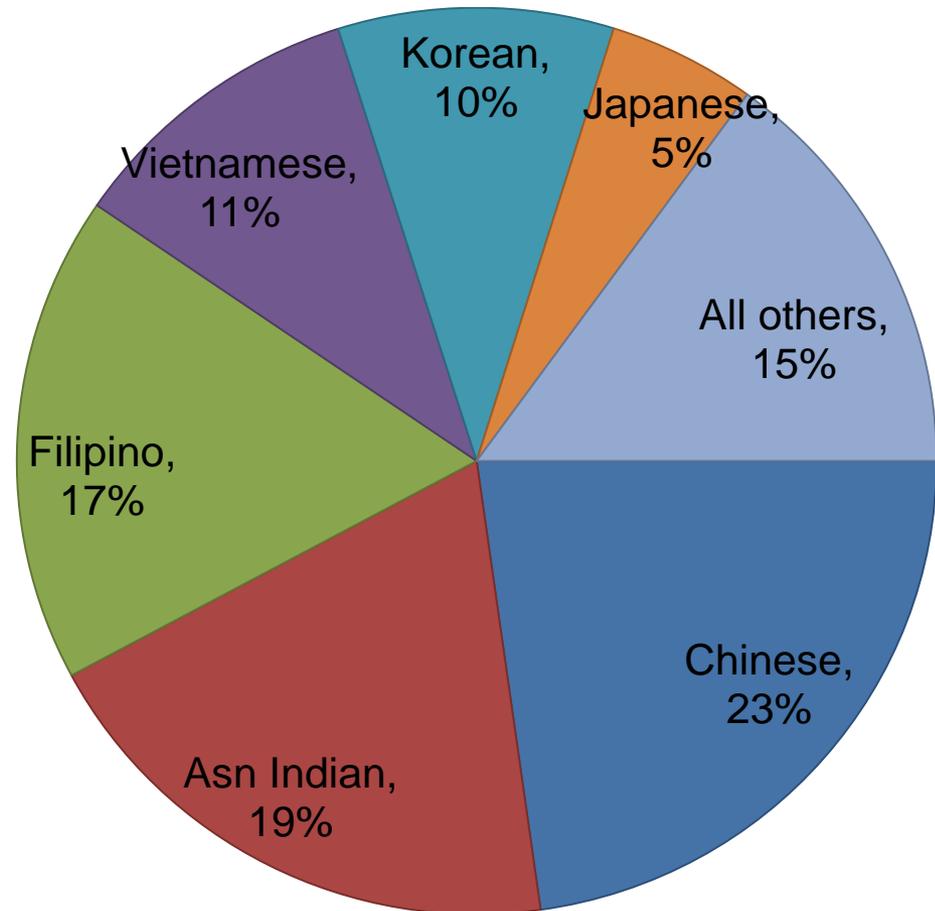
Ethnically and Linguistically Diverse

Asian Languages:

Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Mon-Khmer/Cambodian, Hmong, Thai, Lao, Vietnamese, Tagalog-Pilipino, Dravidian (Tegulu, Tamil, Malayam)

Indic Languages:

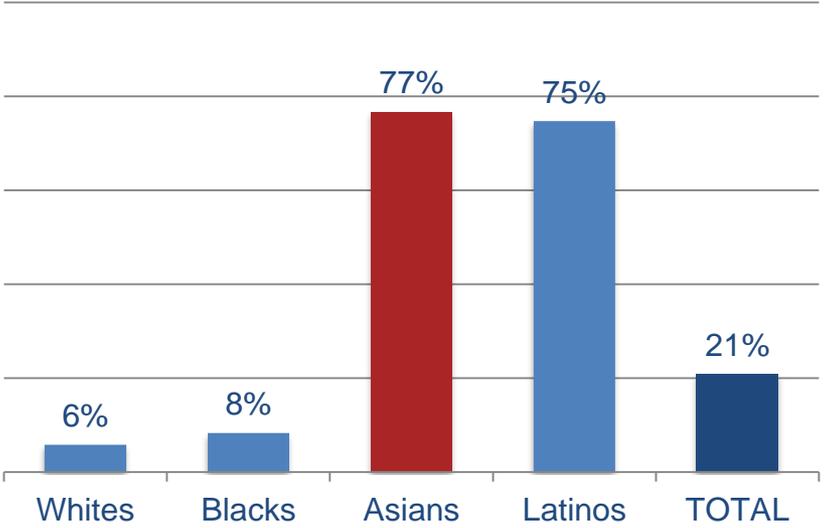
Hindi, Urdu, Gujarati, Punjabi, Bengali, Marathi



“Other Asians” includes Laotians (1.9%), Pakistanis (1.7%), Cambodians (1.6%), Hmong (1.4%), Thai (1.1%), Taiwanese (0.6%), Indonesian (0.4%), Bangladeshi (0.4%), among others.

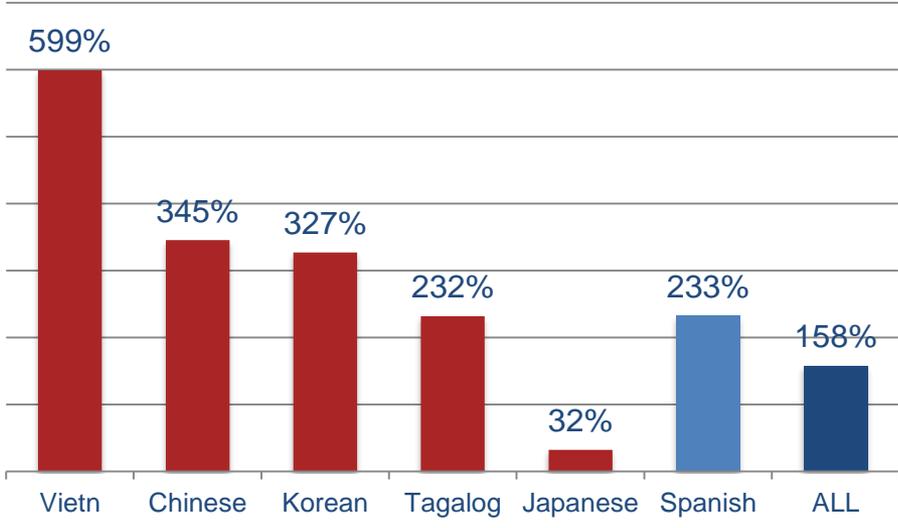
Language Other than English at Home

% Speaking Language "Other than English" at Home, 2011



Source: 2011 ACS

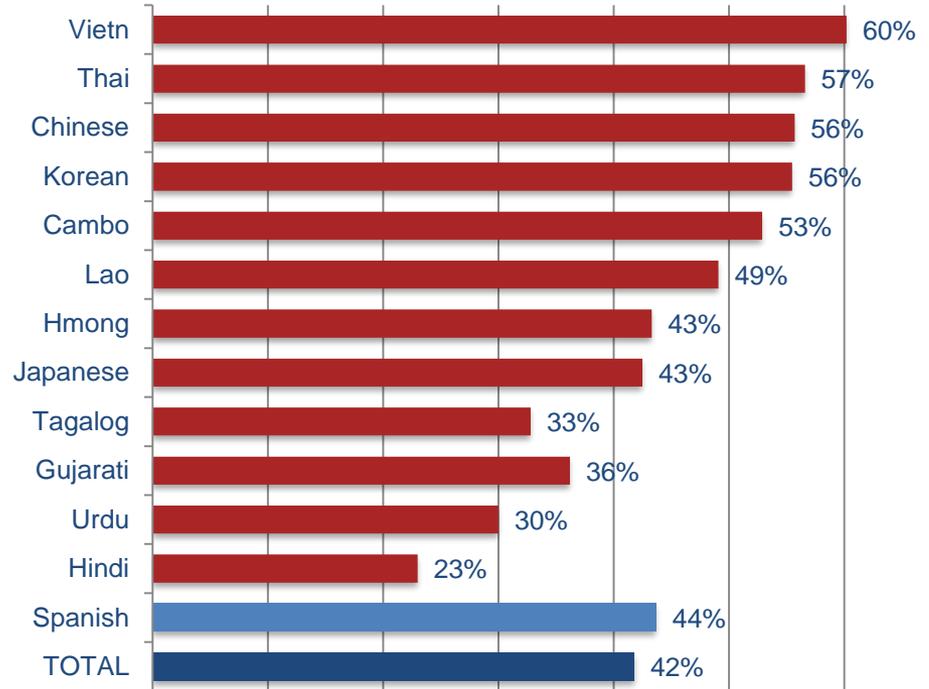
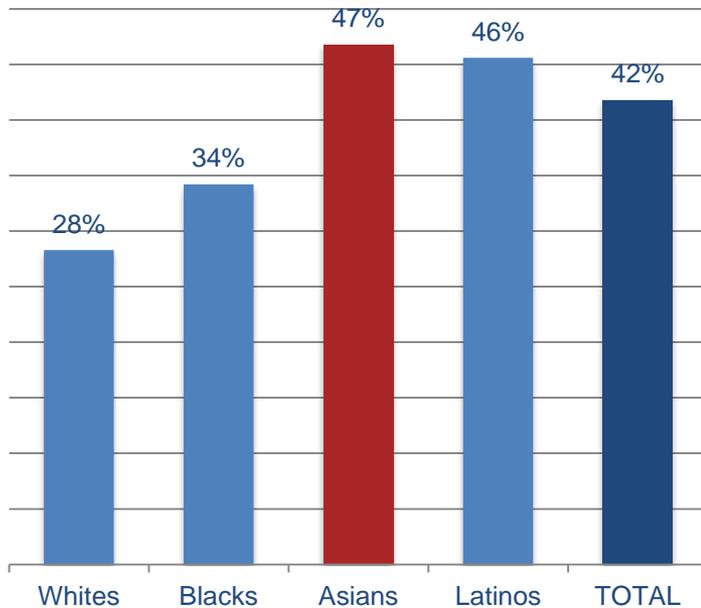
Change in Non-English Language at Home, 1980-2009



Source: 1980, 1990, 2000 Census; 2010 ACS

Limited English Proficiency*

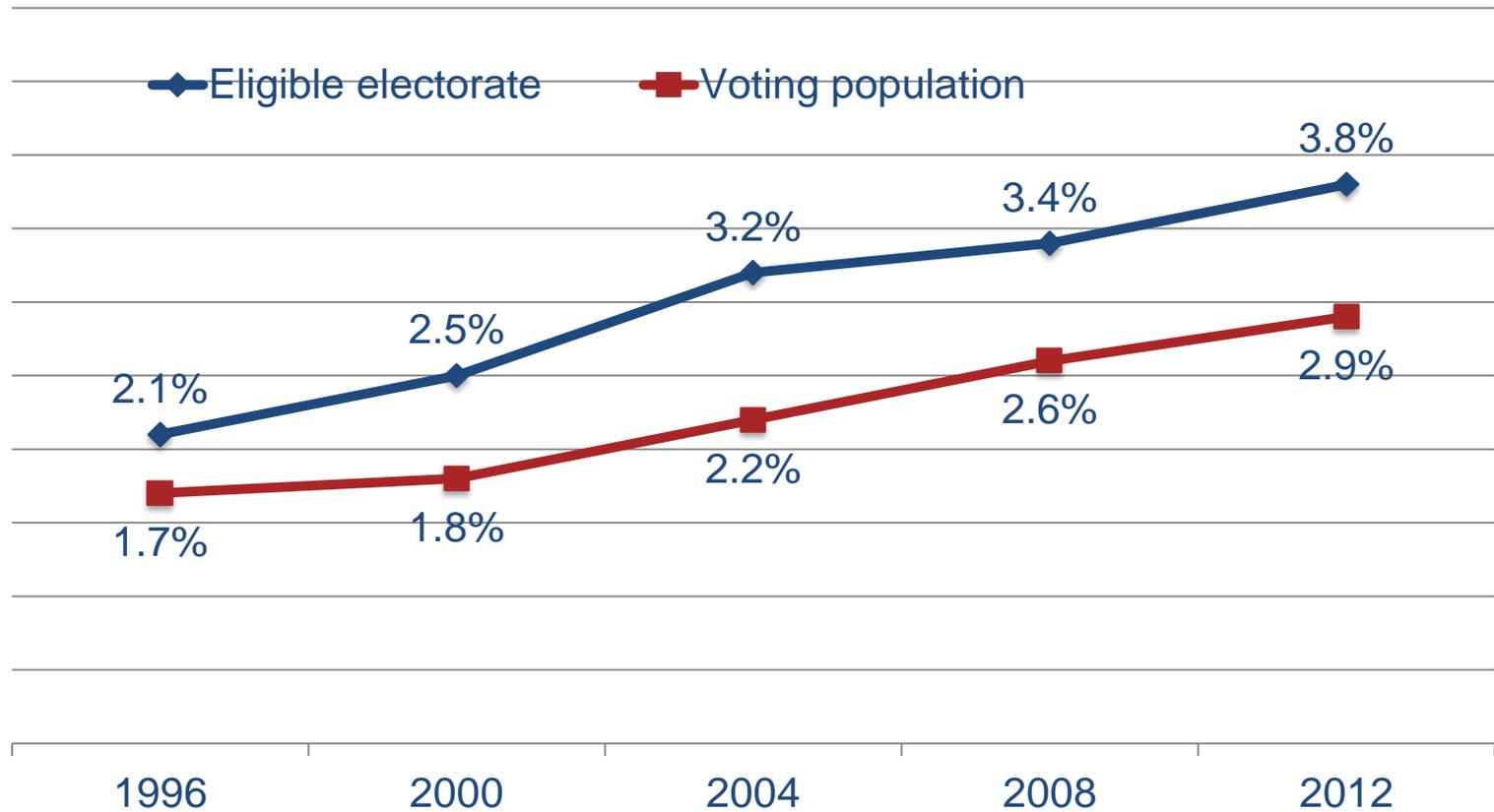
Speaking English "less than very well"



* % in who report speaking a language other than English at home and who English less than "very well")

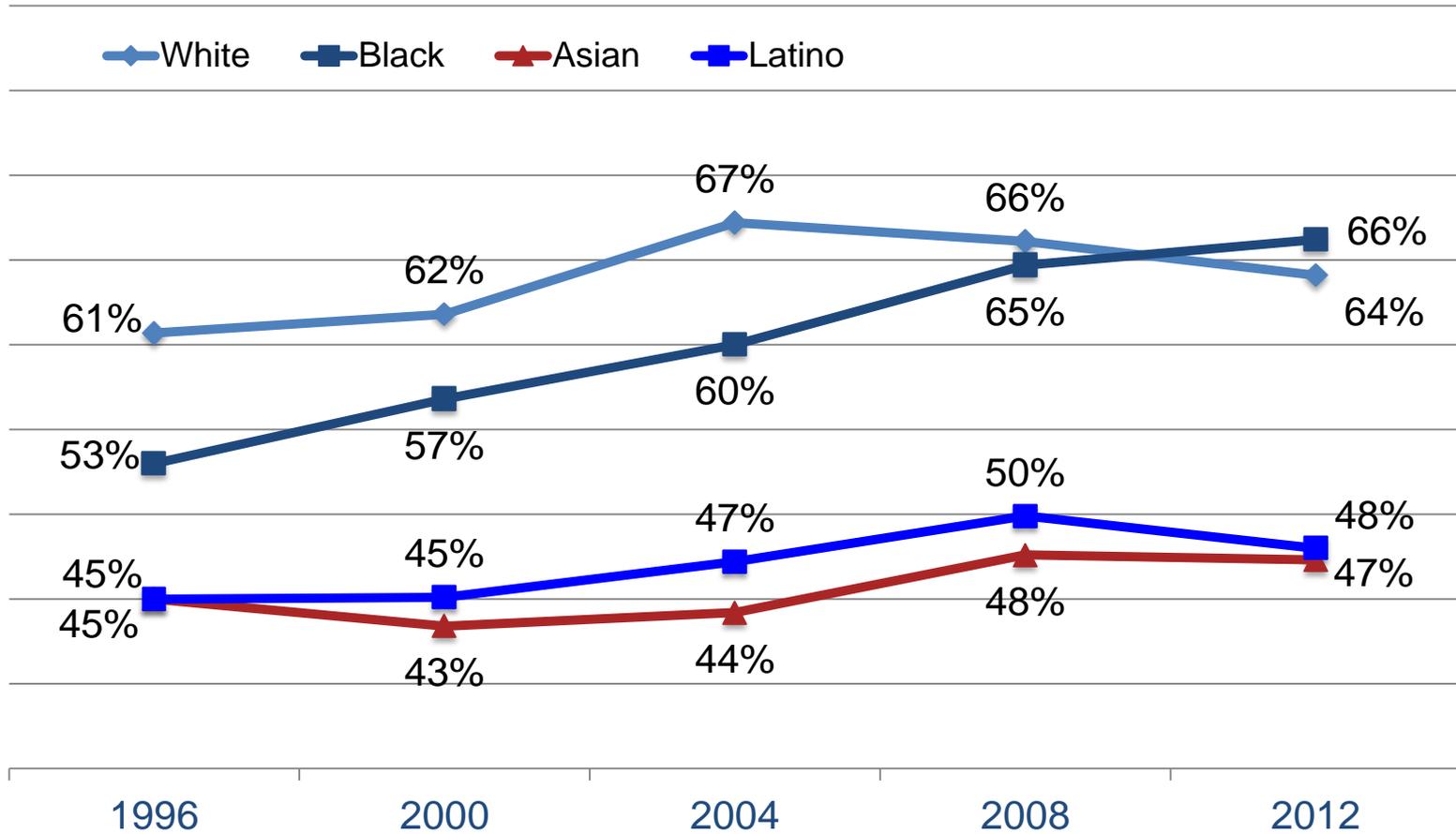
3. Asian Americans are underrepresented in US elections (especially in voter registration) and language is a factor.

A Growing Share of the Electorate



Data: Current Population Survey Voting and Registration Supplements.

But Underrepresented Among Voters



Data: Current Population Survey Voting and Registration Supplements.

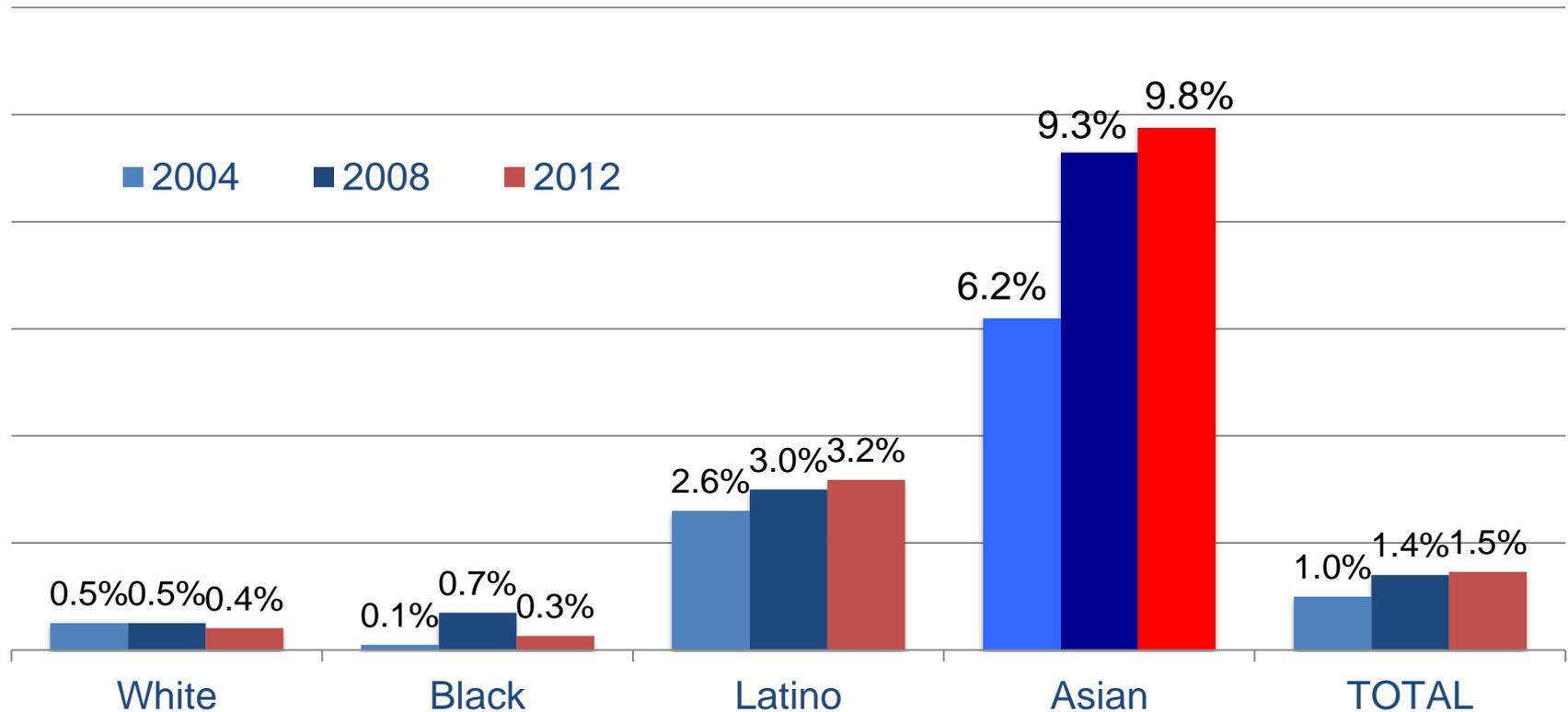
The Registration Gap

	Whites	Blacks	Asians	Latinos
Citizen (among adults)	98	94	68	63
Registered (among citizen)	74	70	55	59
Turnout (among registered)	90	93	86	84

Data: Current Population Survey Voting and Registration Supplements.

Language as a Barrier to Registration

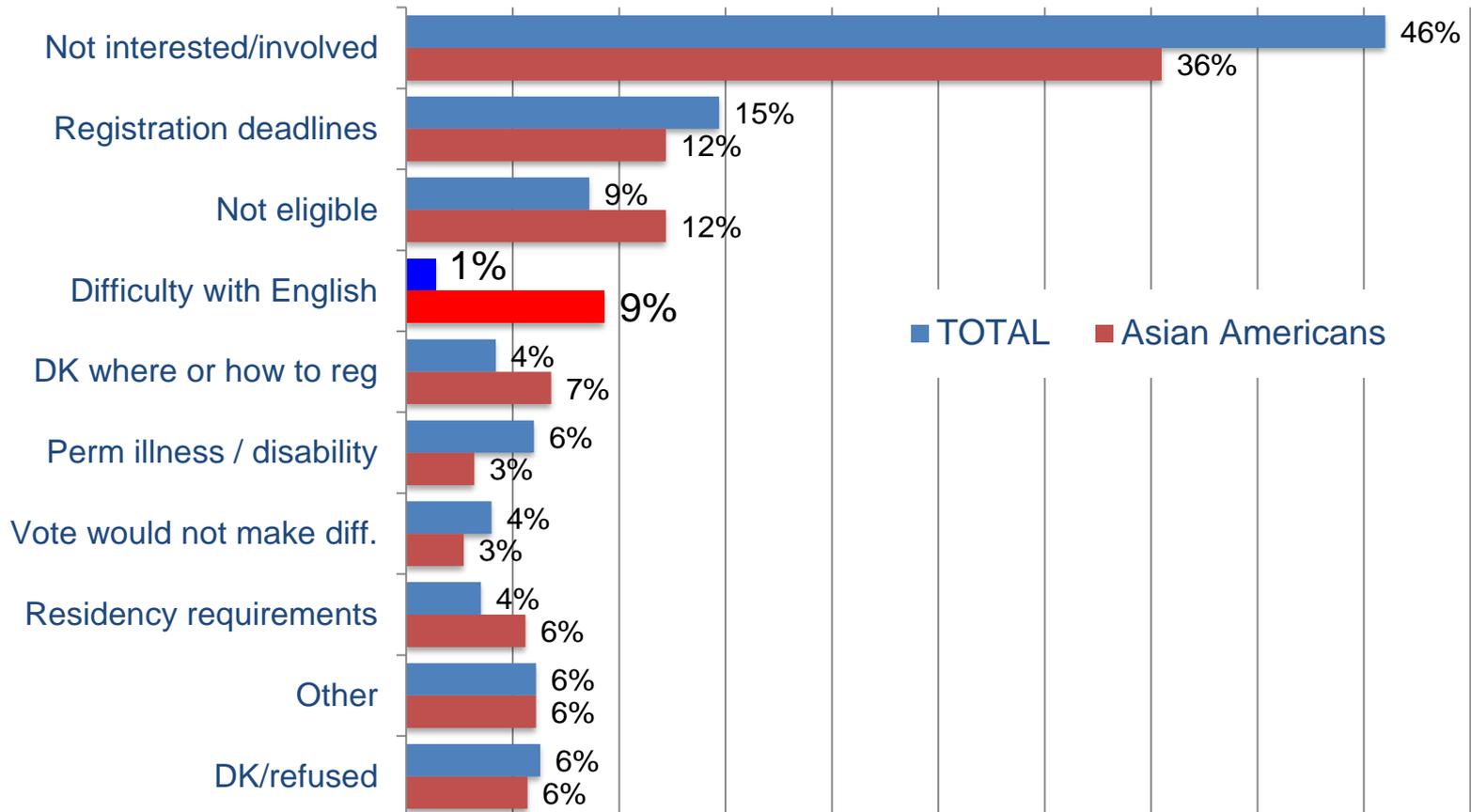
% Not Registered Due to "Difficulty with English"



Data: 2004, 2008, 2012 Current Population Survey Voting and Registration Supplements.

Language Compared to All Barriers

Reasons for Not Registering to Vote in 2008



Data: 2004 and 2008 Current Population Survey Voting and Registration Supplement.

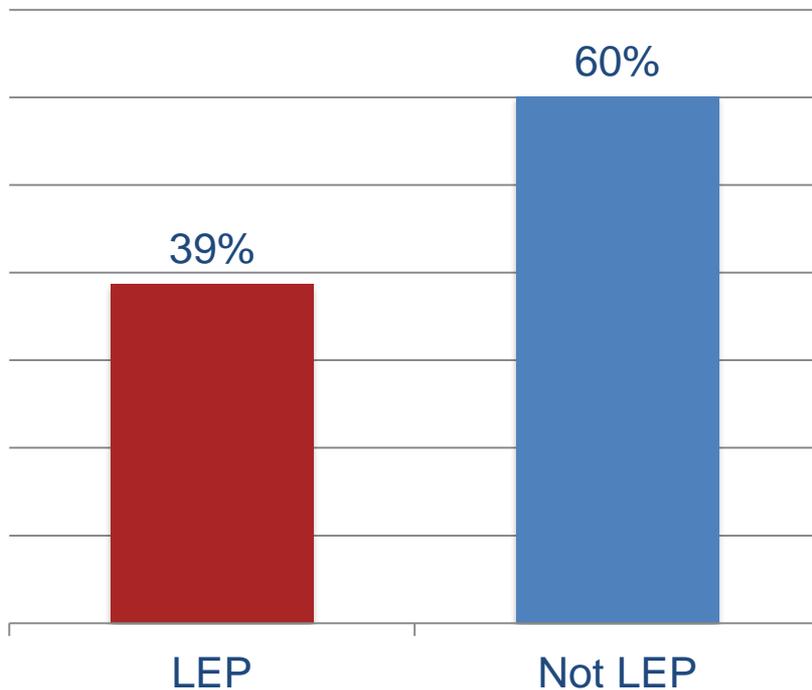
4. Needs assessment in a data-poor environment: evidence from two 2012 surveys.

Two Representative Surveys

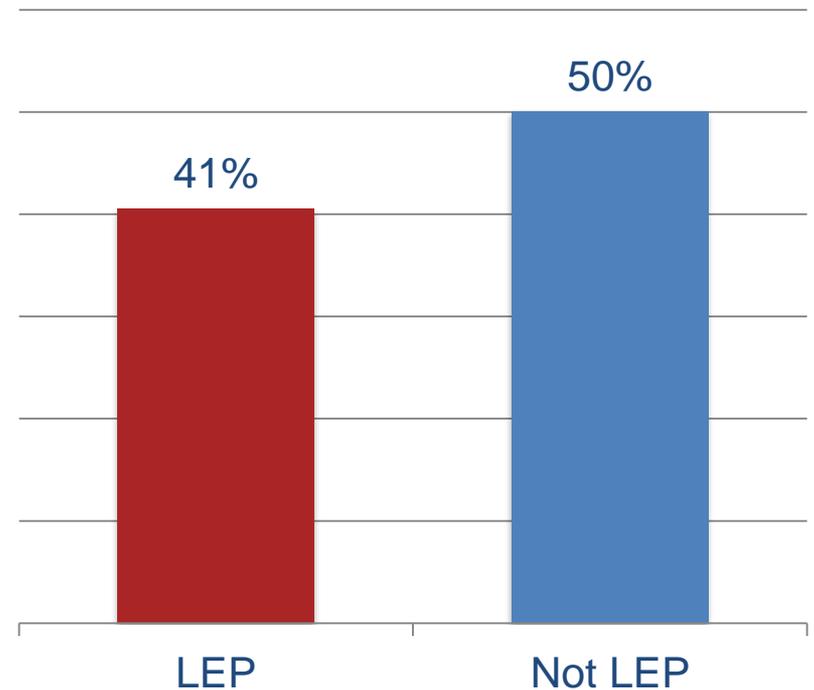
- 2012 National Asian American Survey:
 - 6,257 interviews from late-July to early October 2012
 - 9 Asian languages, English, and Spanish.
 - 48% chose a non-English interview language.
 - 87% of those reported speaking English less than “very well.”
- 2012 AAPI Post-Election Survey
 - 6,609 interviews in Nov. and Dec. 2012.
 - 9 Asian languages, English, and Spanish.
 - 46% chose a non-English interview language.
 - 82% of those reported speaking English less than “very well.”

English Proficiency and Registration

Voter Registration, by LEP



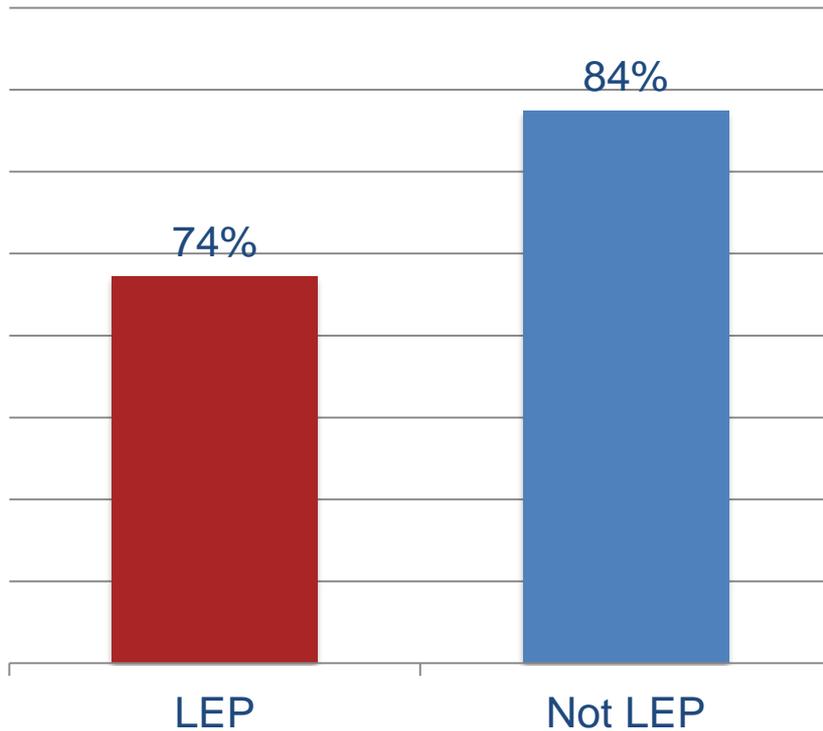
Intent to Register, by LEP



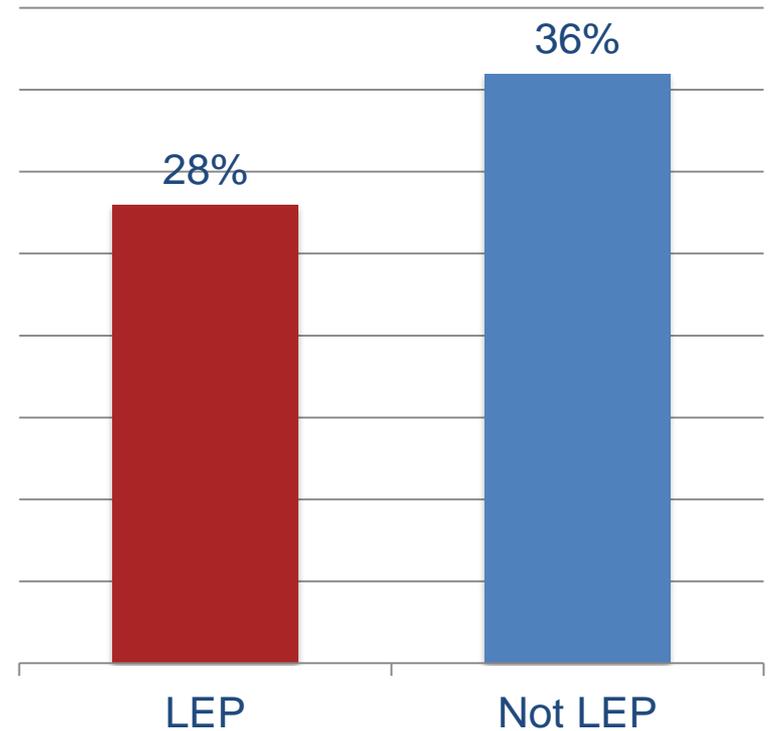
Source: 2012 National Asian American Survey

Language and Electoral Participation

Voter Turnout, by LEP

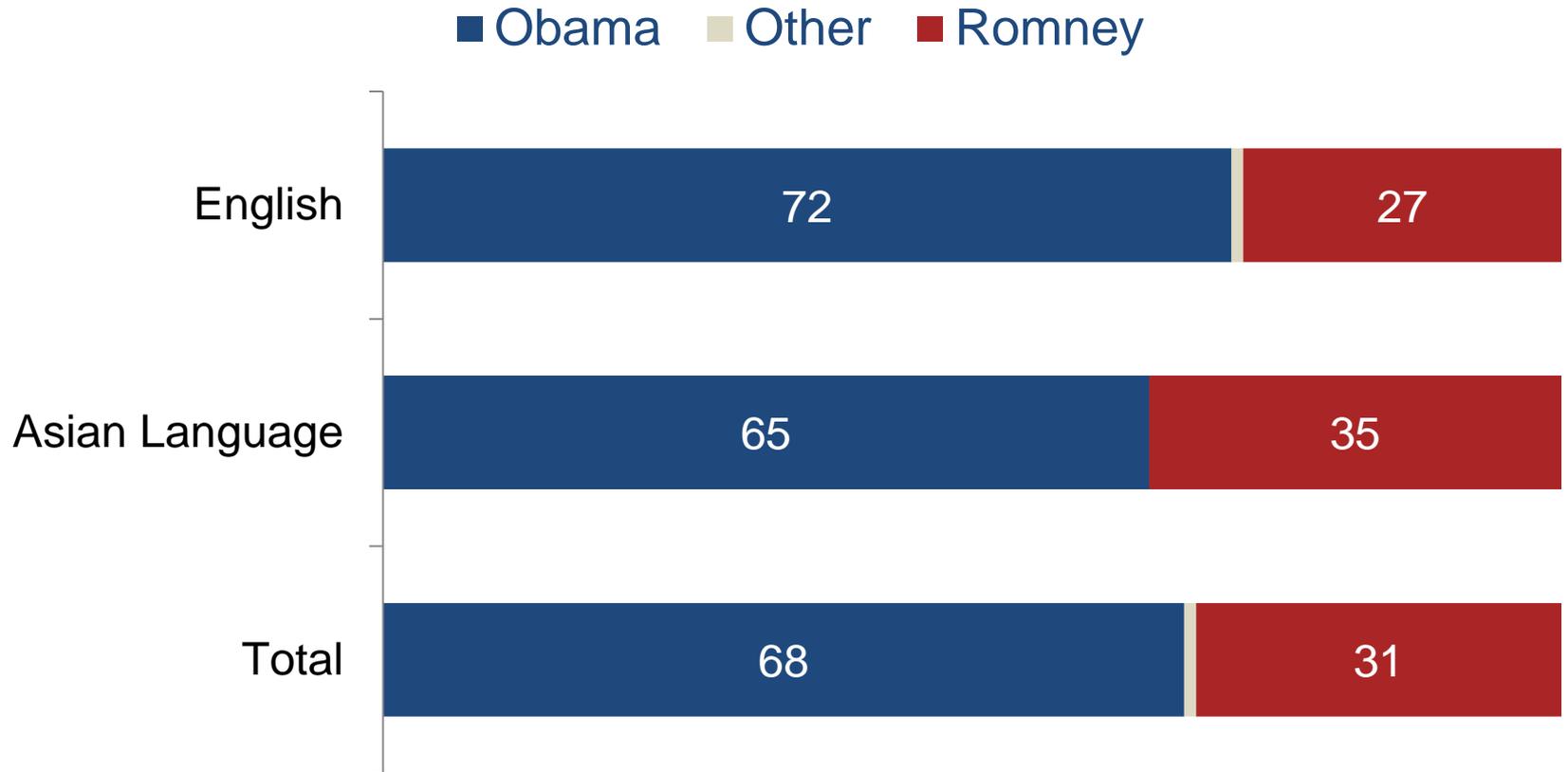


Contact during Election, by LEP



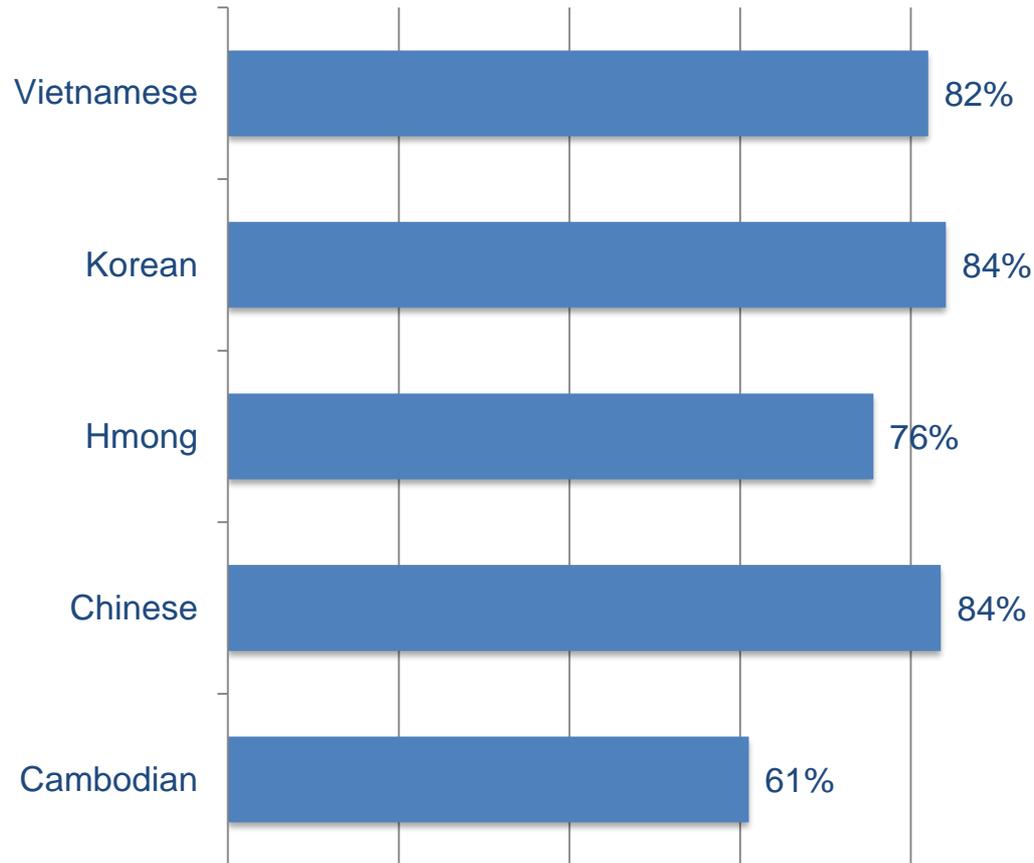
Source: 2012 AAPI Post-Election Survey

Accuracy of English-only Polling



Source: 2012 AAPI Post-Election Survey

Need for In-Language Materials



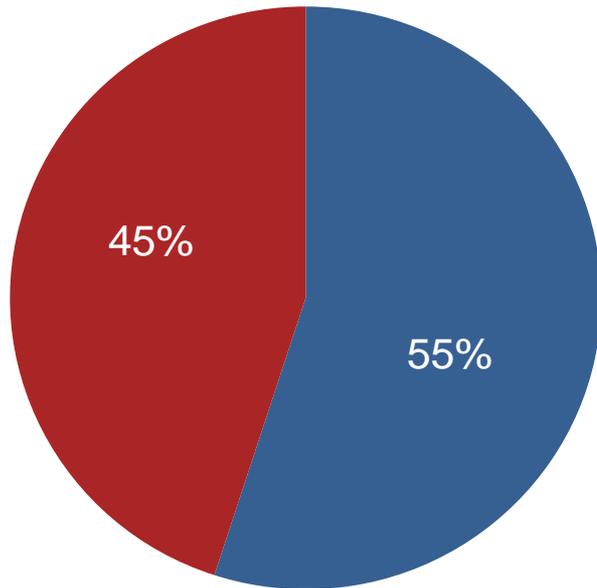
79% of AAPI citizens who are LEP would make use of in-language election materials if made available to them.

Source: 2012 National Asian American Survey

Gaps in Section 203 Compliance

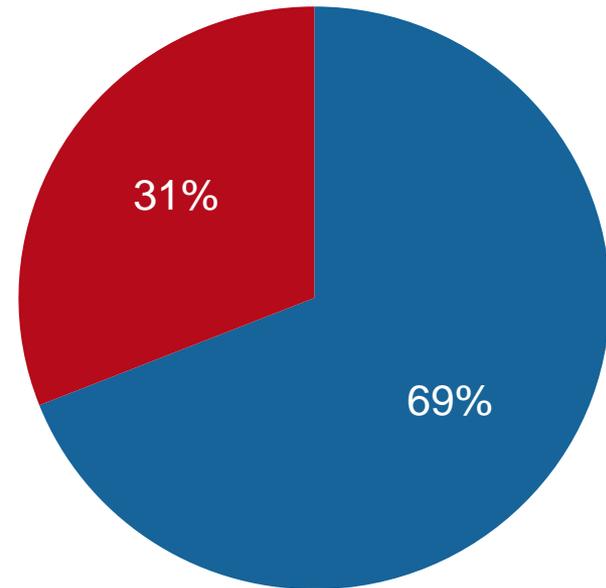
Voted In Person

- Language Assistance Available
- Not Available



Voted by Mail

- Language Assistance Available
- Not Available



Source: 2012 AAPI Post-Election Survey

5. Monitoring Compliance: the 2012 Advancing Justice project.

2012 AAAJ Compliance Study

Jurisdictions	Asian Language Groups Covered	Precincts Monitored
Alameda County (Advancing Justice-ALC)	Chinese, Filipino,* Vietnamese*	120
Sacramento County (Advancing Justice-ALC and ARI)	Chinese*	34
San Francisco County (Advancing Justice-ALC)	Chinese	159
San Mateo County (Advancing Justice-ALC)	Chinese	46
Los Angeles County (Advancing Justice-Los Angeles)	Asian Indian,* Cambodian,* Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Thai,* Vietnamese	162
Orange County (Advancing Justice-Los Angeles)	Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese	68
Santa Clara County (ALA)	Chinese, Filipino, Vietnamese	49
San Diego County (SCAPAL)	Chinese,* Filipino, Vietnamese* ²⁹	67
Cook County (City of Chicago and Suburban Cook County) (Advancing Justice-Chicago)	Chinese, Asian Indian*	76
Quincy, MA (AACA)	Chinese*	5
Hamtramck, MI (APIA Vote-MI)	Bangladeshi*	3
Bergen County, NJ (KACE)	Korean*	15
Harris County, TX (Outreach Strategists)	Chinese,* Vietnamese	29
King County, WA (OneAmerica)	Chinese, Vietnamese*	5

*Denotes a newly covered Section 203 language group as of 2011

Source: Asian Americans Advancing Justice 2012 report

Missing or Poorly Placed Translations

Jurisdictions	% Precincts with at least one missing or poorly displaced translated material
MEAN (all precincts)	45%
Quincy, MA	100%
Hamtramck, MI	100%
Harris County, TX	83%
Los Angeles County, CA	57%
...	
Orange County, CA	29%
Alameda County, CA	27%
San Francisco County, CA	9%
King County, WA	0%

Source: Asian Americans Advancing Justice 2012 report

Gaps in Bilingual Assistance

Jurisdictions	% missing 1> Asian language-speaking poll worker	% with bilingual poll workers missing badges
MEAN (all precincts)	23%	43%
Hamtramck, MI	67%	100%
Harris County, TX	45%	88%
Alameda County, CA	45%	5%
Orange County, CA	38%	47%
...		
San Diego County, CA	13%	18%
San Mateo, CA	17%	5%
San Francisco Co, CA	1%	3%
King County, WA	0%	0%

Source: Asian Americans Advancing Justice 2012 report

Poll Workers' Interaction

Jurisdictions	Cordial to LEP Voters	Waited for LEP Voters to Approach
MEAN (all precincts observed)	61%	35%
Hamtramck City, MI	0%	100%
Orange County, CA	88%	46%
San Diego County, CA	80%	44%
San Mateo County, CA	77%	41%
...		
San Francisco Co, CA	70%	23%
Quincy City, MA	40%	20%
King County, WA	55%	18%
Alameda County, CA	40%	12%

Source: Asian Americans Advancing Justice 2012 report

Access to Provisional Ballots

Jurisdictions	% where option of provisional ballots not offered with missing names
MEAN (all precincts)	14%
Cook Co/Chicago, IL	47%
Quincy City, MA	40%
Santa Clara County, CA	26%
San Mateo County, CA	17%
...	
Harris County, TX	5%
Orange County, CA	5%
San Francisco County, CA	4%
San Diego County, CA	3%
LA County, CA	2%

Source: Asian Americans Advancing Justice 2012 report

Summary

- Asian Americans are a rapidly growing population.
- They are underrepresented in elections.
- Language access is a factor in this under-participation, especially with vote registration.
- There is a demand for in-language materials.
- There are significant gaps in accommodation and wide variance across Section 203 precincts in compliance.

Recommendations

- Establish minimum federal standards inclusive of language access.
 - e.g., accurate and full translation, adequate recruitment and training of poll workers.
- Monitor compliance of standards.
- Gather and analyze better data: standardized, tracking, reporting.
- Create outreach and education programs in the community.
- Collaborate with community organizations and crowdsource to identify flashpoint precincts.